$5.00 (INC GST)

OFFICIAL PROGRAM

FIFA World Cup Qualifier

Australia v Solomon Islands

September 3, 2005 – Aussie Stadium, Sydney

1994 was a very dark year.

1998 got darker.

2002 was pitch black.

Finally, there's light at the end of the tunnel.

Official Sports Drink of the Socceroos

IT AIN'T OVER 'TIL YOU SAY IT'S OVER

Welcome

For football supporters around the world, 2005 sees the culmination of qualification matches for the FIFA World Cup finals in Germany in June/July 2006.

Australia's own "Road to Germany" begins in earnest tonight in Sydney with the home leg of the Oceania playoff against the Solomon Islands, whose team we warmly welcome to our city.

Success in Oceania will see Australia advance to a home-and-away playoff in November against the fifth-placed team from the South American qualification.

Should that occur then Sydney – Australia's football capital – will provide the stage for one of the biggest sports events of the year with a place at Germany 2006 awaiting the playoff victor.

Through its support for these World Cup playoffs, the Iraq match earlier in the year and other initiatives, the New South Wales Government has been pleased to assist Football Federation Australia in its efforts to grow and nurture the world game in this country.

I look forward not only to tonight's match, but to the wider opportunities for football through the establishment of the Hyundai A-League and, importantly, Australia's membership of the Asian Football Confederation from the beginning of 2006.

Morris Iemma
Premier of New South Wales

On behalf of Chairman Mr Frank Lowy and the Board of Football Federation Australia, welcome to the Powerade Series match between the Qantas Socceroos and the Solomon Islands.

Tonight's match holds huge significance with the winner of this series progressing to the final round of qualifying for the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

Keep hold of your ticket from tonight because it qualifies you to be a part of the Football Family Ticket offer should we progress to play the fifth ranked South American team in November. It is our way of giving back to the Football Family. Log on to www.myfootball.com.au for more information.

We said we would leave "no stone unturned" to get to Germany and on that note I'd like to wish the best of luck to our new Head Coach Guus Hiddink as he takes charge of the Australian team in a match for the first time tonight.

With the Hyundai A-League now underway and the Qantas Socceroos on the road to Germany, it is a thrilling time to be involved with football in this country.

Our move into the Asian Football Confederation as of January 1, 2006 will be another significant step and we'd like to thank the Oceania Football Confederation for their support. We will continue to remain a firm friend and remain actively involved with football in the region.

I would like to acknowledge the support of the NSW Government and to all of our partners: Qantas, Nike, Hyundai, Powerade, Telstra, Australian Sports Commission and SBS.

Best Wishes

John O'Neill
Chief Executive Officer
Football Federation Australia

Archie Thompson is one of two locally based players in the Socceroos squad.

ONE FOR THE AGES

With the Socceroos moving to the Asian confederation, this series may be the last meeting between Australia and the Solomon Islands. As well, there's the little matter of taking the next step towards World Cup 2006.

BY **MICHAEL LYNCH**

For the Solomon Islands and Australia, this Oceania World Cup Qualifying tie represents both a beginning and an end. The Solomons have never been this close to a World Cup at senior level before. But, with Australia's imminent departure from the Oceania region, the islanders will surely find themselves in several more regional play-offs in the future – at least while Oceania continues to exist as a separate FIFA confederation.

In that sense these two games, along with the pair they played against the Socceroos in the two-leg Oceania Nations Cup Final last October, represent the beginning of an era in which the Solomons could stamp themselves as one of the leading nations of the region.

For Australia, the regional superpower, these matches represent the chance to farewell Oceania in style, as it will be joining the much larger, more competitive Asian Football Confederation from January 1 next year.

Trips to the Pacific Islands of Tahiti and Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga for qualifying matches will be replaced by longer journeys to play countries like Japan and South Korea, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

While Australia has, in recent times, always been an odds-on favourite to qualify for the World Cup play-offs out of Oceania, its status in the AFC will be more problematic, with no guarantees of success against more seasoned and tougher opponents.

Not that it can take anything for granted here, despite the huge difference in the experience of the players at each country's disposal and the vast gulf in the quality of the competitions they play their club football in.

Australia did dominate affairs in the Oceania Nations Cup final last year when it brought back Harry Kewell, Marco Bresciano and a host of overseas stars to ensure there were no slip ups. It ran out 11-1 aggregate winners, courtesy of a 5-1 success in Honiara and a 6-0 win in Sydney.

That then-coach Frank Farina felt compelled to call out his big guns was as a direct result of one of the most amazing results

Ahmad Elrich will be looking to emulate his goal scoring feats from last year's series against the Solomons.

(The draw in Adelaide) said a lot about the Solomon Islanders' ability to rise to the big occasion.

in Oceania history. Just four months earlier, in the competition staged in Adelaide which doubled as both the Oceania Nations Cup and the Oceania World Cup qualifying tournament, the Melanesians had stunned their hosts by forcing a 2-2 draw. In a positive sign for tonight, the game was one of the most entertaining in Oceania history.

The Solomons might have been taking on an Australian team missing its brightest stars – Kewell, Bresciano and Mark Viduka – but Farina nonetheless fielded a side which included, either as starters or substitutes, Everton midfielder Tim Cahill, Fulham's new signing Ahmad Elrich, Blackburn Rovers Brett Emerton, Premier League Wigan's Josip Skoko and Spain-based John Aloisi. It was a side which should, in theory, have disposed of its game-but-outclassed opposition comfortably.

That it didn't said a lot about the Solomon Islanders' ability to rise to the big occasion and their confidence that, on this night at least, they would give as good as they got. It was obvious that this was not going to be a walkover right from the start, when the Solomons, unlike the rest of the Oceania opposition (bar New Zealand) involved in these ties did not concede early goals.

In fact, it was they who stunned their hosts when Commins Menapi, a striker who had spent plenty of time in Australia with Sydney United in the old NSL, fired them into a shock half-time lead. It took goals from Cahill and Emerton to restore what everyone assumed was the natural order of things, but things didn't work out as planned.

Defender Patrick Kisnorbo was red-carded with over half-an-hour to go, and Australia had to hang on with 10 men against opponents who knew that a draw with their hosts would put them through to the play-offs and eliminate New Zealand, the team which had, up to that point, always been the Oceania No.2 (or, at times, the top dog).

Menapi again provided the shock reply, levelling to spark mass celebrations not just in the Solomons dugout, but among many of the Australian supporters who had warmed to the efforts of the lively Islanders.

The result certainly indicated a changing of the guard in the Oceania pecking order, with New Zealand now under severe pressure to maintain its position. But those who have been watching the results in junior internationals would not have been surprised by the advances the Solomons had, and continue to, make.

Back in 1999, in qualifying play for the Sydney Olympics football tournament, the Solomons had reached the Oceania final before going down to New Zealand. Fast forward to 2005, and it was the Solomons who came through to the Oceania final of the under-20 World Cup qualifying competition before being eliminated by Australia.

It was a similar story for the 2006 under-17 World Cup, where the Melanesians again found only Australia too good for

Batram Suri (left) celebrates after scoring a goal against Australia in Honiara last year.

THREE TO WATCH
Solomon Islands

COMMINS MENAPI (above)
The hero of the Solomons' sensational 2-2 draw with the Socceroos in Adelaide 15 months ago, Menapi is a familiar name to NSL supporters after spending a couple of seasons with Sydney United in that now defunct league.

At 185 centimetres, Menapi is good in the air and works hard for the team, for whom he is very much a leader.

JUDD MOLEA
The Brisbane-based Solomon Islands National under-17 striker is one of the brightest talents emerging from the Melanesian nation's next generation of players.

Molea, who is on a scholarship at the Queensland Academy of Sport, made an impressive debut for the Solomon Islands in the recent Oceania Football Confederation under-17 tournament in Noumea when he netted 10 times.

HENRY FA'ARODO
Blessed with lightening pace and boundless enthusiasm, the hard-running, hard-working Fa'arodo offers a genuine threat playing either up front or attacking from midfield.

The 22 year-old Perth Glory striker has been in this country since he was a teenager, beginning his career in the Victorian Premier League with Fawkner before gaining NSL experience with Melbourne Knights.

Josip Skoko takes on the Solomons Islands' defence against the colourful backdrop of the islanders' fans.

them, although this time at the semi-final stage.

This pattern is one of continued improvement, and with Australia gone, gives the Solomons (along with countries such as Vanuatu, Fiji and New Zealand) the chance to gain more exposure in FIFA tournaments such as the under-17 and under-20 World Cups and Olympic Games. The exposure to such competition can only lift standards – and lead, perhaps, to more Hyundai A-League clubs scouting potential players from their ranks. At the moment the only Solomon Islander playing at the highest level in this country is Perth Glory's Henry Fa'aroda.

Both countries come into these games with new coaches – one a household name with a plethora of achievements at the highest levels of world football, the other a little-known Brazilian returning

THREE TO WATCH
Australia

MARCO BRESCIANO (above)
One of the most highly rated of the new generation of Australian internationals, Bresciano has established himself as a key player in the Socceroo starting 11.

The Parma player is a hard-running, hard-working midfielder who loves to get forward and support the strikers. He is also the team's dead-ball specialist and a potent threat from free kicks.

TIM CAHILL
Has any player made such a telling impact on the Premier League as Cahill did in his first season? Well, any player who was not an established international or big-name star?

Cahill was known as a hard-working, energetic midfielder with Millwall, but he really blossomed when he moved north to join up with Premier League Everton, becoming the club's top scorer in his debut season.

AHMAD ELRICH
The boy from Sydney's western suburbs is the latest Australian to get his chance in the Premier League, having joined Fulham in the off-season.

"For me, it's a dream to be living out this," he says. "It was my boyhood ambition to play for Australia and overseas. To be doing it at the same time, you could not ask for anything more."

Solomon Islands players celebrate after last year's 2-2 draw with Australia in the qualifying tournament.

for his second stint with the Solomons.

New Australian boss Guus Hiddink needs little introduction. The man who moulded the South Koreans into the fiercely competitive, hard-running unit which took the 2002 World Cup by storm, is one of the hottest properties in international coaching.

He is looking after Australia while continuing in his position as head coach at top Dutch side PSV Eindhoven. This will be his first competitive match in charge of the Socceroos.

Brazilian Airton Andrioli took control of the Solomons side in August and is enjoying a second stint in charge of one of the country's national teams. Andrioli had been working at an academy in Brazil, and was also in charge of the Solomons team which made the final of that 1999 Oceania Olympic qualifying competition.

Andrioli and his team have been playing warm-up matches in New Zealand, and the coach said he was confident his players would offer "stern resistence" to Australia after he has worked on their fitness and tactics in lead-up games.

A deeply religious man, Andrioli reportedly said he believed it had been God's call for him to return to the Solomons to finish off what he had started with the Olympic team six years ago.

Hiddink has made a similar religious invocation, if in a more secular context, suggesting on the day his appointment was announced that it would be a "miracle" if Australia was to reach the World Cup and snap a 32-year barren streak.

Some might regard it as a miracle if the Solomons will be able to upset the Australian applecart this time, but boilovers do sometimes happen.

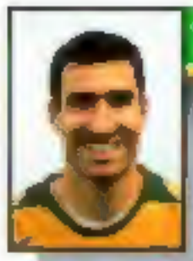
Ask any of the England players who took part in the biggest World Cup upset of all, when they went down 1-0 to the United States in a group match in Belo Horizonte, Brazil in 1950, and failed to qualify for the next stage of the tournament. Some might say the England team has rarely been the same since ...

Michael Lynch is chief football writer at The Age.

Australian player profiles

Mark Schwarzer 1

Born: October 6, 1972, Sydney
Position: Goalkeeper
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1993-2005)
33 games
Current club: Middlesbrough (England)
Previous clubs: Marconi Stallions (Australia), Dynamo Dresden (Germany), Kaiserslautern (Germany), Bradford City (England)

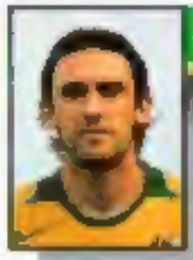


Tony Vidmar 5

Born: July 4, 1970, Adelaide
Position: Defender
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1991-2005)
86 games (3 goals)
Current club: Cardiff City (England)
Previous clubs: Adelaide City (Australia), Eberen (Belgium), NAC Breda (Netherlands), Rangers (Scotland), Middlesbrough (England)

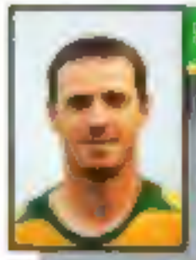
Lucas Neill 2

Born: March 9, 1978, Sydney
Position: Defender/Midfielder
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1998-2005)
16 games
Current club: Blackburn Rovers (England)
Previous club: Millwall (England)



Tony Popovic 6

Born: July 4, 1973, Sydney
Position: Defender
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1994-2005)
52 games (8 goals)
Current club: Crystal Palace (England)
Previous clubs: Sydney United (Australia), Sanfrecce Hiroshima (Japan)



Craig Moore 3

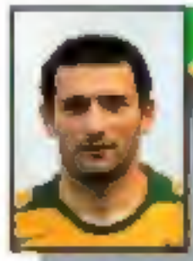
Born: December 12, 1975, Sydney
Position: Defender
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1995-2005)
31 games (2 goals)
Current club: Newcastle United (England). **Previous clubs:** Rangers (Scotland), Crystal Palace (England), Borussia Monchengladbach (Germany)

Brett Emerton 7

Born: February 22, 1979, Sydney
Position: Midfielder/Defender
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1998-2005)
44 games (10 goals)
Current club: Blackburn Rovers (England)
Previous clubs: Sydney Olympic (Australia), Feyenoord (Netherlands)

Tim Cahill 4

Born: December 6, 1979, Sydney
Position: Midfielder
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (2004-2005)
9 games (7 goals)
Current club: Everton (England)
Previous clubs: Sydney United (Australia), Millwall (England)



Josip Skoko 8

Born: December 10, 1976, Mount Gambier
Position: Midfielder
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1997-2005)
40 games (7 goals)
Current club: Wigan Athletic (England)
Previous clubs: North Geelong (Aus), Hajduk Split (Croatia), Genk (Belgium), Genclerbirligi (Turkey)

Sails of the Sydney Opera House from Cruise Restaurant, West Circular Quay

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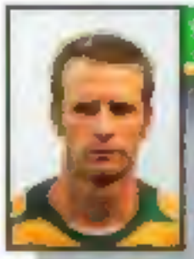
Sydney

Mark Viduka 9

Born: October 9, 1975, Melbourne
Position: Striker
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1995-2005)
26 games (3 goals)
Current club: Middlesbrough (England)
Previous clubs: Melbourne Knights (Australia), Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia), Celtic (Scotland), Leeds United (England)



Vince Grella 13

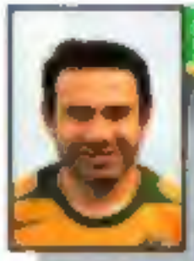
Born: October 5, 1979, Melbourne
Position: Midfielder
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1999-2005)
37 games
Current club: Parma (Italy)
Previous clubs: Springvale City (Australia), Canberra Cosmos (Australia), Carlton

Harry Kewell 10

Born: September 22, 1978, Sydney
Position: Midfielder/Striker
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All international (1997-2005)
18 games (6 goals)
Current club: Liverpool (England)
Previous club: Leeds United (England)

Archie Thompson 14

Born: October 23, 1976, New Zealand
Position: Striker
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (2001-2005)
12 games (17 goals)
Current club: Melbourne Victory (Australia)
Previous clubs: Morwell Falcons (Australia), Carlton (Australia), Marconi Stallions

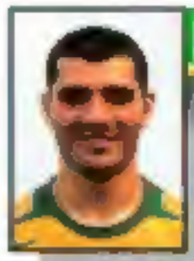


Stan Lazaridis 11

Born: August 16, 1972, Perth
Position: Midfielder/Defender
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1993-2005)
67 games
Current club: Birmingham City (England)
Previous clubs: West Adelaide (Australia), West Ham United (England)

Scott Chipperfield 15

Born: December 30, 1976, Wollongong
Position: Midfielder
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1998-2005)
38 games (10 goals)
Current club: Basel (Switzerland)
Previous clubs: Wollongong United (Australia), Wollongong Wolves (Australia)



John Aloisi 12

Born: February 5, 1979, Adelaide
Position: Striker
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1997-2005)
36 games (19 goals)
Current club: Alaves (Spain)
Previous clubs: Adelaide City (Australia), Standard Liege (Belgium), Royal Antwerp (Belgium), Cremonese (Italy), Portsmouth (England), Coventry City (England), Osasuna (Spain)

Sasho Petrovski 16

Born: March 6, 1979, Sydney
Position: Striker
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (2001) 1 game
Current club: Sydney FC (Australia)
Previous clubs: Bankstown City (Australia), Parramatta Eagles (Australia), Wollongong Wolves (Australia), Viborg (Denmark), Parramatta Power (Australia)

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www.ausport.gov.au

Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission

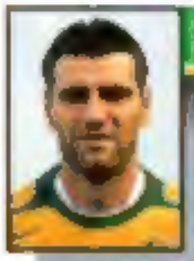
THE AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION PROUDLY SUPPORTS FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

Jon McKain 17

Born: September 21, 1982, Brisbane
Position: Defender
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (2004-2035)
8 games
Current club: AEK Timisoara (Romania)
Previous club: Brisbane Strikers (Australia), National Bucharest (Romania)

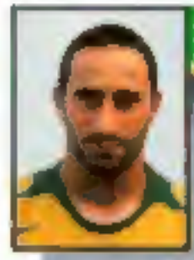
Luke Wilkshire 20

Born: October 2, 1981, Wollongong
Position: Midfielder
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (2004-2005)
4 games
Current club: Bristol City (England)
Previous club: Middlesbrough (England)



Zeljko Kalac 18

Born: December 16, 1972, Sydney
Position: Goalkeeper
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (1992-2006)
51 games
Current club: AC Milan (Italy)
Previous clubs: Sydney United (Australia), Leicester City (England), Roda JC Kerkrade (Netherlands), Perugia (Italy)



Ahmad Elrich 21

Born: May 30, 1981, Sydney
Position: Midfielder
Qantas Socceroos honours:
All internationals (2004-2005)
12 games (4 goals)
Current club: Fulham (England)
Previous clubs: Parramatta Power (Australia), Busan Icons (South Korea)

Jason Culina 19

Born: August 5, 1980, Melbourne
Position: Midfielder/Striker
Qantas Socceroo honours:
All internationals (2005) 6 games
Current club: FC Twente (Holland)
Previous clubs: Sydney United (Australia), Ajax (Holland), Germinal Beerschot (Belgium), De Graafschap (Netherlands)

Marco Bresciano 23

Born: February 11, 1980, Melbourne
Position: Midfielder
Qantas Socceroo honours:
All internationals (2001-2006)
17 games (5 goals)
Current club: Parma (Italy)
Previous clubs: Bulleen (Australia), Carlton (Australia), Empoli (Italy)

Solomon Islands
player profiles

Felix RAY Jr.

1

Age	21
Position	Goalkeeper
International caps	2

Nelson SAL

6

Age	18
Position	Defender
International caps	4

Leslie LEO

2

Age	26
Position	Defender
International caps	32

Alick MAEMAE

7

Age	19
Position	Midfielder
International caps	12

Mahlon HOUKARAWA

3

Age	28
Position	Defender
International caps	3

Abraham INIGA

8

Age	27
Position	Midfielder
International caps	1

Terry OIAKA

4

Age	22
Position	Defender
International caps	0

Kidstone BILLY

9

Age	23
Position	Striker
International caps	2

George SURI

5

Age	23
Position	Defender
International caps	12

Batram SURI

10

Age	33
Position	Striker
International caps	50

Commins **MENAPI**

11

Age	27
Position	Striker
International caps	22

Stanley **WAITA**

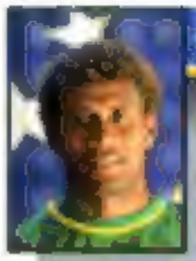
16

Age	26
Position	Midfielder
International caps	28

Richard **ANISUA**

12

Age	20
Position	Defender
International caps	4



Gideon **OMOKIRIO**

17

Age	29
Position	Defender
International caps	32

George **LUI**

13

Age	24
Position	Midfielder
International caps	7

Henry **FA'ARODO Jr.**

18

Age	22
Position	Midfielder
International caps	20

Jack **SAMANI**

14

Age	25
Position	Midfielder
International caps	22

Francis **WASI**

19

Age	29
Position	Midfielder
International caps	28

Judd **MOLEA**

15

Age	16
Position	Striker
International caps	1

Francis **ARUWAFU**

20

Age	
Position	Goalkeeper
International caps	1

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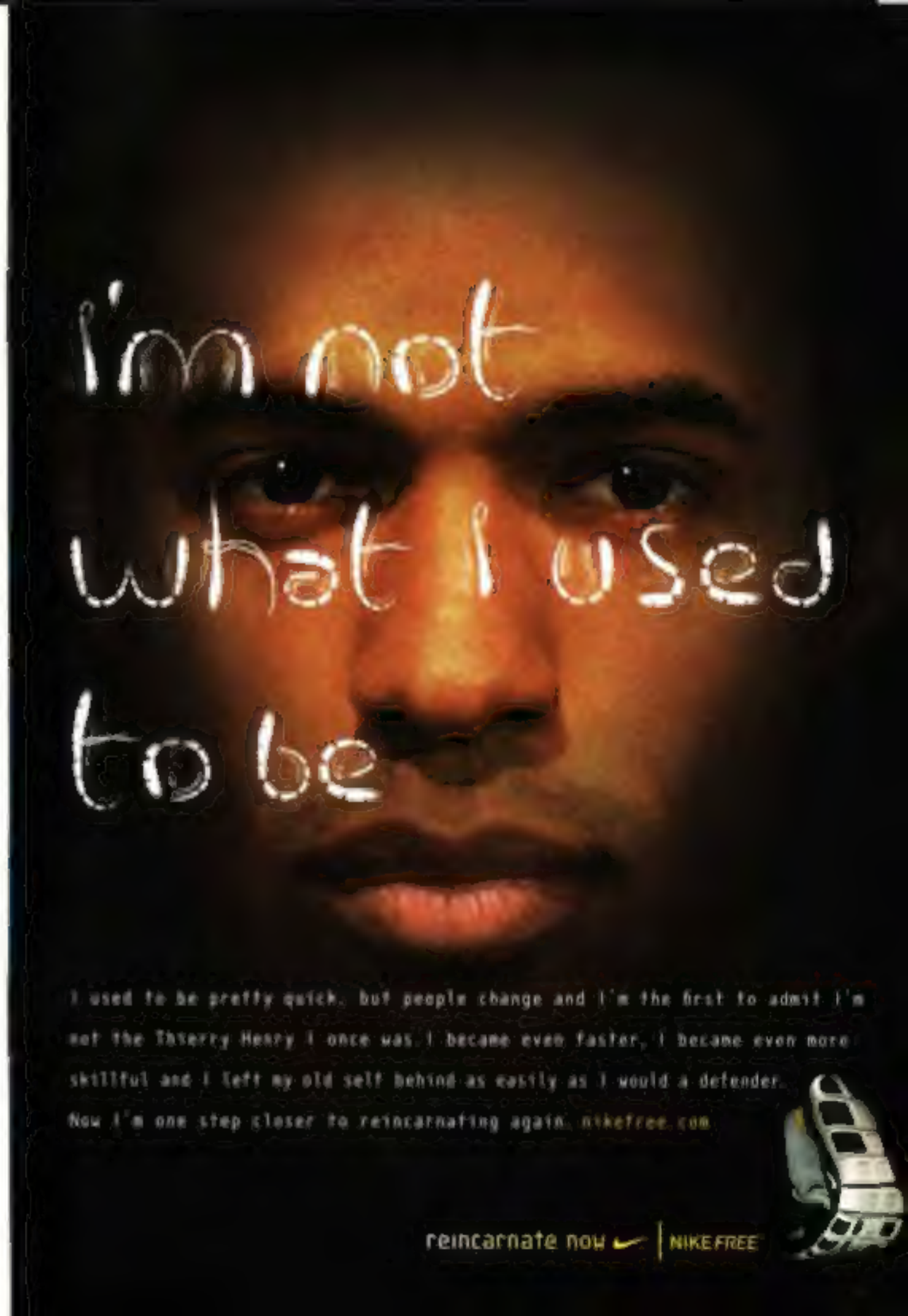

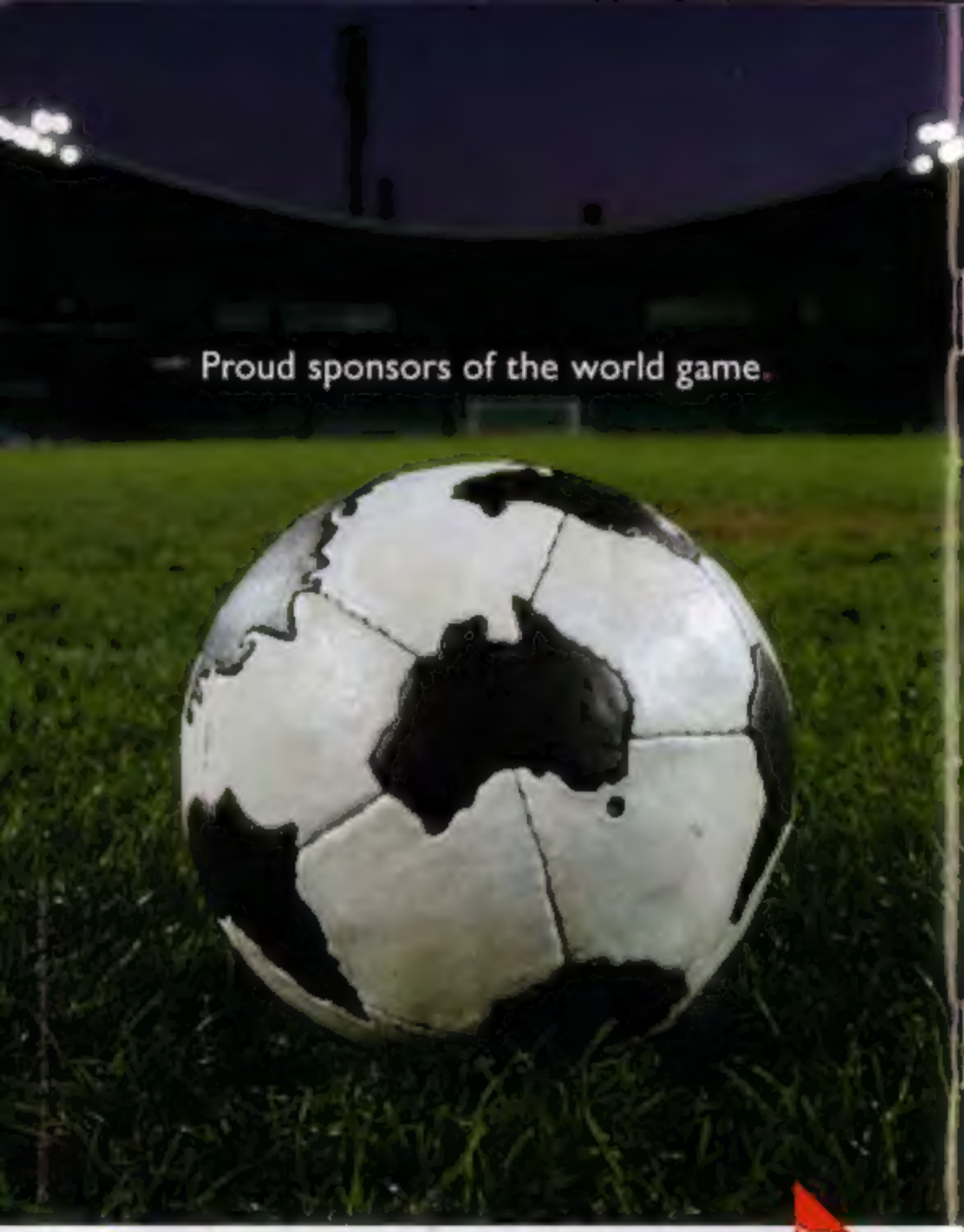

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